

## CANADA AND THE NAVY

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# **Reasons by the Rt. Hon. R. L. Borden, M.P. in Favour of a Canadian Naval Service and Against a Con- tribution.**

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### **Which Policy Should Canada Adopt ?**

**THE CONSERVATIVE POLICY**—An immediate expenditure of \$35,000,000 on three dreadnoughts as part of a permanent policy of centralization and contribution.

**THE LIBERAL POLICY**—A Canadian Naval Service in accordance with the unanimous resolution of the House of Commons of March, 1913.

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## **PREMIER BORDEN'S REASONS IN FAVOUR OF A CANADIAN NAVAL SERVICE AS OPPOSED TO CONTRIBUTION**

On December 5th, 1912, in asking Parliament to vote \$35,000,000 as a contribution towards three dreadnoughts, the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. R. L. Borden said: "There have been proposals, to which I shall no more than allude, that we should build up a great Naval organization in Canada. In my humble opinion, nothing of an efficient character could be built up in this country within a quarter or perhaps half a century. . . . Is there really any need that we should undertake the hazardous and costly experiment of building up a Naval organization especially restricted to this Dominion?" On February 27, 1913, Mr. Borden said, "We say that if we are to remain an Empire, we cannot have five foreign policies and five separate navies."

Many people who have heard these and other utterances of Premier Borden, all of which go to show that he favours a policy of centralization and contribution, are beginning to say that Mr. Borden was never in favour of a Canadian Naval Service, and is using his present arguments to show why a Naval Service of her own should not be permitted to Canada. Let the reasons given by Mr. Borden why a Canadian Naval Service should be organized speak for themselves.

### **Reasons Given in Parliament by Premier Borden why Canada Should Have A Naval Service of Her Own.**

Premier Borden gave his first set of reasons why a Canadian Naval Service should be organized in a speech delivered in the House of Commons on March 29th, 1909, and recorded in the Hansard Debates of that date on pages 3513-3523. Here they are in the order in which they were given.

**Reason No. 1. Because Canada is a nation and has national responsibilities.**

**Mr. Borden.** "Canada to-day is a nation and we are all proud to recognize and hail Canada as one of the greatest nations in the greatest Empire that the earth beholds. But, Mr. Speaker, let us not forget also that a national status implies national responsibility—a primal responsibility is the defence of their territories and the protection of their commerce."

**Reason No. 2. Because Naval Defence is more important to Canada than land defence.**

**Mr. Borden.** "I would venture to submit that our expenditure has to some extent been appropriated to the wrong purpose. In my opinion not less than one-half of the amount appropriated for defence should be devoted for Naval instead of military defence."

**Reason No. 3. Because Canada's markets are largely across seas.**

**Mr. Borden.** "The great market of Canada to-day is not the market which would be especially safe-guarded and preserved to us by the expenditure of a large amount of money for military purposes, but it is the market which may be preserved to us by expenditure for naval purposes."



**Reason No. 4.** Because Canada's commerce is largely water-borne. "The expenditure in defence of our sea ports, in defence of our coasts and in defence of the waters of the ocean which are immediately adjacent to our coast is of immensely greater advantage and of immensely greater importance than the expenditure each year after year, we are dispersing in connection with the military forces of this country. . . I desire to emphasize as far as may be in my power the importance to Canada of some attempt at naval defence in the defence of our sea ports and the protection of our commerce."

**Reason No. 5.** Because Canada's cities and harbours are wholly exposed, and open to possibilities of being raided.

**Mr. Borden.** "How many cities and towns are there in Canada which would be open to the raids of a second or third class cruiser? I suppose there are not less than 40 or 50 cities and towns in Canada of 2,000 population or upwards which would be open to the raid of an enemy coming against our coast."

**Reason No. 6.** Because the British Admiralty has warned other Dominions that absence of local coast defence would expose them to great danger if England became involved in war.

**Mr. Borden.** "Let us not forget that the danger pointed out to the Commonwealth of Australia by the Admiralty itself was the imminence of a movement of that kind in Australian waters and against Australian coasts in case the Empire should unfortunately become involved in any great naval war."

**Reason No. 7.** Because Britain's policy of centralization of her fleets near home exposes the outlying Dominions to danger.

**Mr. Borden.** "The policy of the British Admiralty is a policy of centralization and we are all aware that the Australian naval programme which has recently been entered into with the full approval and consent of the Mother Country is altogether designed to guard the coasts of Australia against danger of that kind."

**Reason No. 8.** Because it is the proper line upon which to proceed.

**Mr. Borden.** "I am entirely of the opinion in the first place that the proper line upon which we should proceed in that regard is the line of having a Canadian Naval force of our own. I entirely believe in that."

**Reason No. 9.** Because the policy of contribution has been tried elsewhere and has proven a failure.

**Mr. Borden.** "The other extreme has been tried as between Australia and the Mother Country and it has not worked satisfactorily in every respect. In great Britain the contribution has, perhaps, been regarded as rather unsatisfactorily. In Australia it failed in the end to meet with the approval of the people."



**Reason No. 10.** Because a policy of contribution causes dis-satisfaction as to the extent to which it is being used for protection.

**Mr. Borden.** "The Australians felt that the contribution which they had been making for some years past was **not really being used to give that protection to Australia** which her interests demanded."

**Reason No. 11.** Because Australia has adopted the policy of a Naval Service of her own.

**Mr. Borden.** "The policy of Australia at the present time is to build up a flotilla of submarines and torpedo boats which, in case of war would **co-operate** with the armed cruisers and battleships of the British Navy."

**Reason No. 12.** Because a local Naval Service affords protection which Great Britain could not give in time of need.

**Mr. Borden.** "It was pointed out in discussing this question that Australia in providing a force of that kind, would provide a force which it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for Great Britain to send across the seas."

**Reason No. 13.** Because in protecting themselves the outlying Dominions afford the best protection for the Empire.

**Mr. Borden.** "It was pointed out that in thus protecting themselves they (the Australians) were providing the **best possible forces for the protection of the Empire.**"

**Reason No. 14.** Because Parliament ought to control the expenditures of money on naval defence.

**Mr. Borden.** "I think that the expenditure of money designed for that purpose ought in the main at least to be **under the control of our own Parliament.**"

**Reason No. 15.** Because by a Naval Service Canada would do her duty to herself and the Empire.

**Mr. Borden.** "By attending to the defence of our own coasts by **co-operation and co-ordination** with the Imperial Naval forces, we would be rendering a real service in the defence of the Empire and we would be doing **our duty not only to Canada, but to the Empire as a whole.**"

**Reason No. 16.** Because belonging to the British Empire, we should defend our own sea coasts.

**Mr. Borden.** "Being of the Empire and in the Empire we must take our fair share of the burden of the naval defence of that Empire and **particularly of our sea coasts.**"

**Reason No. 17.** Because the need for a Naval Service is urgent.

**Mr. Borden.** "I would be glad if my Rt. Hon. friend would accept the suggestion of inserting in that paragraph\* some word which would indicate an **intention to act promptly.** If

(Par. 4 of resolution of House of Commons of March 29th, 1909 'The House will cordially approve of any necessary expenditure designed to promote the organization of a Canadian Naval Service in co-operation with and in close relation to the Imperial Navy, along the lines suggested by the Admiralty at the last Imperial Conference')



my Rt. Hon. friend would insert before the word organization some such word as 'immediate' or even 'early', I think it would greatly improve the paragraph. If the resolution of my Rt. Hon. friend were so amended I think it would commend itself to the **unanimous approval** of the members of this House."

**Reason No. 18.** Because a Canadian Naval Service has been in contemplation for many years.

**Mr. Borden.** "Now I understand what the Hon. gentleman contemplated in 1902. **At that time he looked to the establishment of a Canadian Naval force.** On page 18 of the proceedings of the Imperial Conference of 1902 the **First Lord of the Admiralty** announced this: 'Sir Wilfrid Laurier informed me that His Majesty's Government of the Dominion of Canada are contemplating the establishment of a local Naval force in the waters of Canada. . . . The Canadian Government are prepared to consider the naval side of defence as well.' . . . I am thoroughly aware that **the late Raymond Prefontaine intended to establish a Canadian Naval militia or naval force** of some kind. He told me so about a year before his death. Mr. Prefontaine was a man of large views and of great courage."

**Reason No. 19.** Because self-respect demands protection of our own shores.

**Mr. Borden.** "I believe that the defence of our shores and the protection of our own commerce is due to **the self-respect which should fill the heart of every man in this country.**"

**Reason No. 20.** Because contribution implies that Canada has a status of a Crown colony, not of a self-governing Dominion.

**Mr. Borden.** "You say that we may rest content to depend for our naval defence on Great Britain. Well, if we have assumed the status of a nation in one respect, **shall we adhere to the status of a crown colony in other and still more important respects?**"

**Reason No. 21.** Because the Munroe Doctrine would not afford a sufficient defence of Canadian coasts and trade.

**Mr. Borden.** "You speak of the Munroe doctrine, but that doctrine would not defend **our coasts, our cities, and our commerce** from the attacks of any foe. And it is idle to suggest that we could in the case of a great naval war obtain any measure of comfort from the Munroe doctrine."

**Reason No. 22.** Because there should be unanimity between political parties as to naval policy.

**Mr. Borden.** "This is too great a question for the introduction of party strategy. It is a question in respect to **which we should all rise superior to all party methods.** . . . We desire that this resolution should go out as the **unanimous resolution** of the Parliament of Canada to the whole world."



## **Reasons Given in England by Premier Borden, Why Canada Should Have a Naval Service of Her Own.**

At a luncheon given to him as Leader of the Conservative party in Canada, at the Constitutional Club in London, England, on Dominion Day, July 1st, 1909, Mr. Borden gave his reasons for preferring a Canadian Naval Service. Here they are:

**Reason No. 23. Because a Canadian Naval Service serves a more practical purpose than the offer of Dreadnoughts.**

**Mr. Borden.** (As reported in *London Times*, July 2nd, 1909.)

"He was aware that some feeling was created in the British Isles owing to the fact that Canada did not by resolution or by speech from the Prime Minister, vouch safe to offer one, two or three dreadnoughts. He thought the resolution in the form in which it was based, while its promises might not upon the surface seem to some as significant at the moment as the offer of one or two dreadnoughts would have been, laid down a permanent policy for the Dominion of Canada upon which both parties united and which would serve a more practical purpose than any such offer of dreadnoughts."

**Reason No. 24. That a Canadian Naval Service is in accordance with the purpose and terms of the unanimous resolution of March 1909.**

**Mr. Borden.** (As reported in *London Times*, July 2nd 1909).

"The effect of the resolutions which were passed was—1. that they recognized the duty of Canada to take her share in Imperial defence as her wealth and importance increased; 2. that the payment of regular and periodical contributions to the Imperial Treasury was not, as far as Canada was concerned, the most satisfactory solution of the problem of Imperial defence; 3. that the House would approve any expenditure necessary for the speedy establishment of a Canadian navy in close relation to and in co-operation with the Imperial Navy; and 4. that the Canadian people would be prepared to make any sacrifices necessary for the purpose of co-operating with the Imperial Navy in maintaining the integrity of the Empire and its naval supremacy.

**Reasons given in his own constituency by Premier Borden why Canada should have a Naval Service of her own.**

The reasons given in Parliament were public reasons which would appeal to Canadians generally, irrespective of locality. The reasons given in England were those which it was thought might help to smooth the feelings of the jingo Imperialists who were displeased because the Canadian parliament had unanimously adopted the policy of a Naval Service of her own instead of a policy of centralization and contribution. Mr. Borden was not then Premier and therefore could promise nothing. Since becoming Premier he has yielded wholly to their wishes and demands. The speech at Halifax was delivered on October 14th, 1909, and was reported fully in the Canadian papers on the day following. It was intended to appeal specially to his own constituents. Here are reasons given on that occasion, in addition to reasons previously given.



**Reason No. 25.** There is no constitutional difficulty about establishment of a Canadian Naval Service.

**Mr. Borden.** "Mr. Brodeur says he has secured naval autonomy. There is not and there never has been for the past 40 years any constitutional or other difficulty about the establishment of a navy by Canada, whenever its people think fit of adopting that course."

**Reason No. 26.** Because it is the duty of Canadians to carry out a policy unanimously agreed to by both political parties.

**Mr. Borden.** "The House of Commons last session laid down a certain policy touching naval defence in which both political parties united. It may not have satisfied the aspirations of all Conservatives, but it seemed our bounden duty to place if possible above the limits of partisan strife, the question so vital and far-reaching and to attain the standard which has for many years governed both political parties in Great Britain with respect to foreign relations."

**Reason No. 27.** Because a Canadian Naval Service affords a demand for materials, labour and skill of Canada.

**Mr. Borden.** "One governing principle at least should control, namely, that out of our own materials, by our own labour, and by the instructed skill of our own people, any necessary provision for organizing naval defence should be made so far as may be reasonably possible."

**Reason No. 28.** Because a Canadian Naval Service will help to stimulate and encourage the shipbuilding industry of Canada.

**Mr. Borden.** "In this connection may we not hope that there shall be given a stimulus and encouragement to the shipbuilding industry of Canada which has long been lacking."

**Reason No. 29.** Because Providence has endowed Canada with great opportunities which the construction of a Canadian Naval Service would help to be realized.

**Mr. Borden.** "To-day should be Nova Scotia's opportunity. Providence has endowed this province with the material, with the men and with the maritime situation which are essential not only for developing a scheme of naval defence and protection, but, also, for the resuscitation of that shipbuilding industry, which once made Nova Scotia famous throughout the world."

### **Reasons Given in Toronto by Premier Borden Why Canada Should Have A Naval Service of Her Own.**

Speaking to a crowded audience before the Centre and South Toronto Conservative Clubs on November 1st, 1909, Premier Borden repeated many of the reasons which he had given in his previous speeches as to why Canada should have a Naval Service of her own. The speech was fully reported in the Conservative papers on the day following. The press report contains the following: "Mr. Borden spoke with great deliberation and evidently weighed his words carefully. He unhesitatingly reaffirmed his adherence to the naval defence policy



outlined in the House of Commons resolution passed last March," also, "Mr. Borden scouted the idea of Canada relying on the navy of the United States in time of danger, and characterised as absurd the plea that we are incapable of building a navy in this country." Being in a manufacturing centre, he laid special emphasis on labour and protection. His words in this connection were:

**Reason No. 30.** Because a Canadian Naval Service will give employment to the labouring population.

**Mr. Borden.** "I also believe that in any such undertaking, our own natural resources and raw material, and best of all, our labouring population ought to be considered and employed as far as may be reasonably possible."

**Reason No. 31.** Because a Canadian Naval Service would mean the protection of Canadian industries.

**Mr. Borden.** "Above all, our labouring population ought to be considered and employed as far as may be reasonably possible. That course is incident to the policy of protection."

### **Self-Government, Mr. Borden and the Will of the People,**

This account of Mr. Borden's reasons for the adoption of a Canadian Naval Service could not be more appropriately concluded than with three additional reasons contained in his Toronto speech. They are of special significance in view of the fact that Mr. Borden is prime minister of Canada to-day. One is expressive of Canada's right of self-government, one of Mr. Borden's own individual belief and one of the will of the people.

**Reason No. 32.** A policy of contribution in preference to a Canadian Naval Service would mean the abandoning of self-government by Canada.

**Mr. Borden.** (After referring to the insinuation that the construction of a Canadian Naval Service might lead to a reckless expenditure of public moneys), "The remedy is not to be found in any abnegation nor abandoning of the functions of self-government, otherwise we should hand over to Great Britain all our great spending Departments for better administration, that would be a counsel of despair and a shameful confession of our incapacity for decent self-government."

**Reason No. 33.** Because in Mr. Borden's own opinion a Canadian Naval Service would be effective and powerful.

**Mr. Borden.** "It is my humble belief that the Canadian unit of the Imperial Navy may be powerful and effective."

**Reason No. 34.** Because it is the will of the people that Canada should have a Naval Service of her own.

**Mr. Borden.** "The will of the people must prevail, but I believe it will affirm what Parliament with unanimous voice has declared."

The question is: Shall the will of the people prevail, and self-government be maintained?